AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An image data management apparatus comprising:

property information obtaining means for obtaining property information items of an image data set to be managed;

security processing method setting means for setting either no security processing or a specific security processing method for each of the items of the property information obtained from the property information obtaining means;

security processing means for carrying out the specific security processing method on each of the items of the property information ~~according to~~ for which the security processing method ~~that~~has been set by the security processing method setting means;

attachment decision means for deciding that first ones of the items of the property information are to be attached to the image data set;

attachment means for attaching the first ones of the items of the property information decided by the attachment decision means ~~having been subjected to the security processing~~ to the image data set; ~~and~~

image data storage means for storing the image data set attached with the first ones of the items of the property information by the attachment means~~, wherein~~; and

property information storage means for storing remaining items of the property information not attached to the image data set by the attachment means in a manner to permit access thereof with a corresponding image data set with attached property information, wherein

said property information obtaining means includes at least one of image analysis means for obtaining the property information of the image data set by analyzing the image data set and input means for inputting items constituting the property information, the input means being used by a user to input the items of the property information.

2. (Canceled.)

DRA/RFC/kpc

3. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The image data management apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the <u>specific</u> security processing method that can be set by the security processing method setting means refers to ~~no processing,~~ encryption processing, or electronic watermark processing.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The image data management apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the image data storage means and the property information storage means are connected to each other via a network.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The image data management apparatus as defined in any one of Claims 1, 3, and ~~to~~ 4, wherein the property information includes an item representing a parameter of image processing to be carried out on the image data set.